

Testimony of

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Before the

Education Committee

March 15, 2023

Good afternoon, Senator McCrory, Representative Currey, Senator Berthel, Representative McCarty, and members of the Education Committee.

I testify today in support of House Bill 6884. This bill takes important steps toward addressing the educator shortage in Connecticut, showing educators that theirs is a respected profession, and ensuring that our classrooms and schools can provide the best possible education for our students.

Please consider the proposed changes. It is more important than it has ever been to keep good educators in the system, and things are only getting harder in the public school system. The rate of teacher burnout has always been high, but in a post Covid world, many experienced teachers retired sooner than they have otherwise planned, and many younger teachers have left the field entirely in pursuit of other industries with better pay and less demands on their time and well-being. The teacher shortage has been extreme, forcing students into overpopulated classrooms where teachers are unable to give them the instruction and personal guidance they need. In addition, the review processes, which significantly outnumber those in any other field, are time consuming for both teachers and administrators. Although it is extremely important to be sure teachers are giving quality instruction, there truly is no need for the amount currently required. Any incentive to help keep teachers in the field as well as attract new ones to take the place of the increased retirement rates is imperative to maintain any kind of useful and supportive education for our children. The quality of education was compromised during the pandemic, and we need to keep the most qualified professionals in our school systems. This is obviously beneficial to everyone involved (students, teachers, people considering teaching as a profession, parents, and administrators), but we need to act now to give people the promise of a better tomorrow. Thank you so much for your time, understanding, and for ultimately proceeding with the best interests of students and teachers, and the greater community at large, in mind. We can do this if we work together!

Thank you for your time and consideration.

